

Minutes of the Wasatch Historical Society  
Heber City Tabernacle, Heber City, Utah

Wednesday, November 17, 1965

7:30 p.m. Meeting called to order. Approximately 30 persons present.

President Don Barker presiding. Prayer by Reed Kohler.

Don Barker reported that the Daniel's Ward was installing a new organ and would give us the old one if we would come and get it.

He also read a letter from Dr. Goodman of the Utah Valley Symphony thanking us for the opportunity of coming to play for us. They were pleased with the enthusiasm exhibited by those who attended.

"Arsenic and Old Lace" was played twice in October to a good crowd.

Garn Hatch introduced architect Georgius Young Cannon, the guest speaker, who discussed "Why Restoration." Mr. Young stated that he was amazed at the quality of the workmanship of the pioneers, and that we should preserve the physical evidence of our Church; it is as important as the doctrine. People are fascinated by the history of our Church. Our heritage must be preserved.

He said that if every community saves one historical building, we will have a great heritage. Architecture exists for pleasure.

The Coalville Tabernacle was the subject of the remainder of his talk. He also showed films of the building. He pointed out that the Heber Tabernacle is of colonial design while the Coalville Tabernacle is gothic.

The Coalville Tabernacle has a pointed arch in the main window and round windows in the rest of the structure. The detail around the interior windows is very much like the Salt Lake Temple. The painting of early Church leaders on the ceiling was done by a man named Olson who was not a member of the Church. He was stranded in Utah, so they put him to work painting the ceiling. It is the only building around here with this type of ceiling. It must be preserved.

Mr. Young discussed the problem of restoration and the problems involved in making a building authentic. He used the Beehive House as an example. He told of the many leads they had to follow to discover how the original looked. This restoration is completely true, even to the square iron nails used to finish the floor.

The Beehive House has had a tremendous effect on tourists. They go away with a definite concept of the Mormon people and their culture. We should let the world know of our heritage and we should also live up to it.

Don Barker suggested that the time to open be changed to 8 p.m. so that Relief Society members of one of the wards can attend, and this was voted and passed on. He also passed a picture of the original interior of the Heber Tabernacle. This was obtained through Lethe Tatge's efforts. It shows a great deal of detail.

A discussion followed about scheduling a program on New Year's Day (Saturday). This was turned over to the program committee.

Jim Cannon, a nephew of Georgius Cannon, spoke for a few minutes. He congratulated us on our wonderful community spirit and stated that he was very pleased with our victory. "In the story of the Mormon pioneers, coming West was the least of their difficulties; colonizing was the problem. It is the same problem with the Tabernacle. Saving it was the least of your problems. Now comes the rest."

"We should all join together to help save the Coalville Tabernacle. I'm impressed with the fact that Europeans have come of age in matters of historic preservation. Our people go to Europe because of the color of beautiful old towns and not for recreation. You are working for something of great economic importance. You can't measure the value of a building such as this. Other than your scenery, the other major attraction is the Tabernacle. I hope that neither will ever be destroyed."

Lethe Tatge asked for information on our lovely old homes. This is to be the subject for a talk to the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Ferrin Whitaker offered the closing prayer.

Barbara McDonald, Secretary

17 Nov 65

# MINUTES OF THE WASATCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wednesday, January 12, 1966

Heber City Tabernacle, Heber City, Utah

8 p.m. Meeting called to order. 54 people present.  
President Don Barker presiding. Prayer by Wallace Provost.  
Minutes were read and approved.  
Forthcoming productions were discussed.

Garn Hatch gave a report on a meeting in Salt Lake City January 11 concerning a state-wide fund raising drive for the Heber Tabernacle and Social Hall renovation and restoration. Fifteen were present at the Utah State Historical Society building, including David Bigler, Public Relations Director for U. S. Steel. He had organized the United Fund drive in Utah Valley this past autumn and has had much experience in the area of fund raising.

Mr. Bigler suggested that we organize a Utah Heritage Foundation with the first objective being the renovation of the Tabernacle in Heber City. Mr. Bigler said that this would be an ambitious and challenging program. He felt that there is a broad interest in our heritage and we would gain support throughout the state.

Another meeting will be held January 18 in Salt Lake City to consider the practicability of organizing a statewide heritage foundation. The first objective would be renovation and restoration of the Heber Tabernacle.

President Don Barker introduced the guest speaker for the evening, Mrs. Lethe Tatge, who spoke on the history of Heber Valley.

A man is a product of his yesterdays. Whatever your ancestors were has helped to make you what you are. Many of us are descendents of the builders of this valley. God was good to us because our forebearers laid a pattern of faith, integrity, energy, sacrifice, and ability to do. The story of these builders should inspire every member of our generation because ours is a glorious heritage.

"He who cares not whence he came, cares not when he goes", and "A man who has no reverence for memory of his ancestors does not deserve to be remembered by his posterity."

The men who were sent here by President Brigham Young reported that it was the most beautiful valley in the territory. Others called it "Paradise Valley." In 1858 cattlemen came to investigate it for grazing, and in July 1858 a party headed by J. W. Snow surveyed a section of land. They called it "London", because the first settlers were Scotch and English people and some Irish. A road up the canyon from Provo was finished and William Meeks was the first leader.

In 1859 the first people to settle came with Meeks. There were 11 men, 3 wagons, and provisions. They planted crops and built houses and returned for their families. There was an early fall and a hard winter which discouraged people. Only 18 families stayed throughout the first winter, but they were a courageous people who grew and waxed strong.

In 1861 a Ward was organized. Joseph Stacey Murdock was bishop. In 1862 the town was given the name of Heber City in honor of Heber C. Kimball. The people here were converts of Heber C. Kimball while he was on his English mission. Some of the most proficient and capable men in Utah were sent to colonize this valley. They grew in wisdom and fostered culture, waxed strong and loved the Lord their God and they built well. The pioneers were people of strength, dignity and culture. This is apparent in this building.

12 Jan 1966

Now, as in the beginning, good men and great men are coming to our valley, loving it as the first pioneers.

Ferrin Whitaker told of why he returned to Heber Valley, and Lethe paid tribute to the Swiss people of Midway. They've given something to us like the tone of a bell, sweet and clear.

Barbara McDonald, Secretary

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